ROBERT S. PEABODY FOUNDATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

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Andover, Massachusetts

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Mr. John M. Kemper
Clerk of the Board of Trustees
Phillips Academy
Andover, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Kemper:

During the year 1952, the major research activities of the Robert S. Peabody Foundation have been confined to studies of material already collected. Some field work has been carried on, however.

Mr. Howard Sargent continued with the Northeastern Archaeological Survey in New Hampshire but was unable to locate any sites which require extensive excavation. This year he followed the Connecticut Valley south from the vicinity of Lyme to Charlestown, searching in both Vermont and New Hampshire. Although he examined many favorable locations, and investigated reports of Indian remains at some distance from the river, on streams and lakes, he was unable to find any sites which appear to be of great significance. Unless high water, settlement, and development of industry have combined to destroy the evidence, the conclusion that the northern and central portions of the state were never intensively occupied seems inevitable as the result of two season's work. Thus it appears necessary to turn to the region around Lake Winnepesaukee, the lower reaches of the Connecticut and Merrimac rivers, and the more rolling, less rigorous, southeastern part of the state, closer to salt water, for remains of the larger settlements.

The Foundation, in collaboration with the Peabody Museum of Yale, tested the Guida Farm, near Westfield, Massachusetts, where a large and important Indian town was reported. Preliminary excavations were carried on there in 1942 by Edward Brooks, for the Massachusetts Archaeological Society; more extensive work was done there by Mr. Brooks for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, in 1945. Results of this work were partially covered by a short article in the BULLETIN OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. From this article others inferred that the site had been extensively occupied during a long period of time, and that it held the clues to relations between prehistoric Indians of New York state and those of central Massachusetts. Because of the fact that the farm is being stripped for loam and fill it was clear that any remaining evidence must be salvaged at once. In this work Dr. Irving Rouse, of Yale, operated with Mr. Byers and Mr. Johnson. They were joined by Mr. Kenneth Starr, a graduate student at Yale, and by Mr. William R. Young, of Springfield. In three days of extensive testing, the promised evidence of significant occupation during several periods failed to appear.

It was therefore decided to make a comprehensive and probably final study of the pottery fragments and stone implements which had been found at the farm, and which are now deposited in the Museum of the American Indian, the Springfield Museum of Natural History, and at the Guida Farm. This project has met with the willing cooperation of

all concerned. Dr. Rouse will study the pottery, while Mr. Byers will concentrate on the stone objects. It is planned to publish the report in the BULLETIN OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

In the last Annual Report attention was called to the finding, near Ipswich, Massachusetts, of a fluted point and associated implements, all forms recognized as belonging to the earliest known occupation of the east. They are very similar to implements found on the High Plains in association with extinct forms of bison and other animals not now characteristic of the area in which the remains were found. Although completely satisfactory age determinations by the radiocarbon method have not yet been possible because of lack of datable materials, it is believed that the people who made them roamed over the western plains between 9000 and 11,000 years ago. At that time climate was colder than that of the present day, and continental glaciers stood slightly north of the Great Lakes. No age determination has been possible in the east, but sites on which fluted points have been found are often in locations which are now not ideally suited for human habitation, by reason of their remoteness from water or inacessibility from easy avenues of travel. Within recent years six locations in the east have been found to produce fluted points associated with other implements. They appear to constitute an older complex and a younger complex, according to the forms represented. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance to be certain of the area in Ipswich in which similar forms had been found.

As was stated in the last report, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers visited the small sand plain near Bull Brook, in Ipswich, where Mr. William Eldridge, Mr. Joseph Vacarro, and other members of the Northeastern Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society had made the finds. They went again, in May, accompanied by Mr. Howard A. Jones, of Wakefield, Chairman of the Chapter. Although they were again unable to identify an old land surface on which the artifacts were found, it is reported that they occur at an almost uniform depth in a zone of sand which shows no bedding at all. A slight difference in the texture of the sand can be felt with a trowel, and it is in the lower, somewhat less compact zone that the ancient tools have been found. This unbedded sand appears to be a zone disturbed by intense frost action on the sandy bed of a shallow braided stream flowing from retreating glaciers. The river bed itself was left as an elevated sand plain when surrounding ice blocks melted. Because it is inconceivable that men could have occupied the place while the still-active stream was depositing sand, it is rather difficult to conceive of the means by which the artifacts became embedded. It was our opinion that occasional implements might be found, but because no old land surface could be identified we did not feel that an expensive excavation project was justified, nor did we feel that we should take away a site that had been found by others.

Our conclusions regarding the likelihood of finds were proved quite incorrect by events of the summer, when members

of the Northeastern Chapter continued their excavations in a series of shallow trenches scattered over the surface of an area at least a half-acre in extent. After spending every available week-end and holiday of the summer in their search, they succeeded in finding a number of types of chipped implements which parallel in many details those found on other sites at which these early complexes have been found. This is the first location east of the Champlain Valley where such finds have been made. The finders have agreed to permit the Foundation to study their implements, to make casts of those which seem especially significant, and to prepare a full report on the circumstances of the find and the several classes of tools which are represented.

In November, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers visited the site again, accompanied by Professor Charles E. Stearns, Jr. and Mr. Joseph Hartshorn of the Division of Geology, Harvard University, in order to examine details of stratigraphy and deposition. This is the third occasion within recent years when artifacts have been discovered in somewhat similar positions. The means by which they were deposited and came to rest in the peculiar location is not understood. This fact poses some problems that are not only interesting but also of fundamental importance to sciences which rely on stratigraphy. They can only be solved through close collaboration of archaeologists and geologists.

In November the Foundation was visited by Dr. Richard S. MacNeish, of the National Museum of Canada, who came to study the specimens brought back from the Yukon by the

Andover-Harvard Expedition. In the collection Dr. MacNeish found that two complexes which he has discovered in the Northwest Territories are well represented. These appear to boast a respectable antiquity although post-dating by 3000-4000 years the more widely known fluted point complexes which are associated with extinct animals. The data secured by Mr. Johnson now seem to be of paramount importance in placing these two complexes in their proper chronological order, since he found them in place in stratified deposits in which a weathered soil profile can be easily distinguished.

During the summer Mr. Johnson made great progress with analysis of the collection from Titicut. It is now apparent that a very involved series of geological events must have accompanied the deposition of the sand in which the implements were found. Stones which bear the marks of cutting by wind-driven sand are found in association with some tools. However, the tools themselves show no evidence of sand blasting. Since it has been generally believed that the wind-cut stones are the product of strong winds blowing off a continental ice sheet, the implication of contemporaneity in association of such objects with implements made by man requires the most careful study. Furthermore, certain hearths are reputed to have been found in sands which seem to have been deposited by winds of considerable force. Detailed study of the geology of the area has been undertaken for the Foundation by Mr. Joseph Hartshorn, of Harvard. His interpretation of the sequence of events, combined

with the results of archaeological analysis will provide a discussion of significant and newly defined problems which will clarify our knowledge of the occupation of New England by its first inhabitants.

Mr. Johnson has tentatively recognized an Archaic Horizon in southern New England which is somewhat distinct from the well-known Archaic Horizon of New York State. Preliminary study seems to indicate that the Archaic Horizon of southern New England is more closely related to that known from New Jersey, Georgia, and other areas in the southeastern United States. Analysis of the later material from Titicut is proceeding apace, and promises to result in a description of successive changes in industrial habits of the people taking place between 3000-5000 B.C. and 1650 A.D.

In this connection, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Byers went to Attleboro, Massachusetts in December to examine a collection from what appears to be a comparable site on the shores of Lake Assawompsett. The site which has been excavated by members of the Cohannet Chapter of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, under the direction of Mr. Maurice Robbins, is situated only about ten miles from Titicut. At Assawompsett, types of tools and their vertical distribution closely parallel phenomena reported at Titicut. Comparison of the data from the two sites may make possible a more complete interpretation of the occupation of the region.

Some progress in analysis of the collection from the Nevin Shell Heap, in Maine has been made. Here the complexity of the deposit precludes an approach on the basis

of simple stratigraphy. It has been possible to identify two masses of shells which appear to have been laid down at different times. The list of species of shellfish represented in one mass is not identical with the list of those represented in the other. The inference is that between the laying down of the two masses, there elapsed sufficient time to permit some change in environment to occur. It is thought possible that alteration of the relation between sea level and land level may have made water conditions unfavorable for oysters and more favorable for clams. So far no difference in forms of implements can be related to the two bodies of shells.

It now seems likely that early Indian cultures in Maine are closely related to those in New York and Ontario. The first pottery found in the latter region is a simple ware that was decorated by the impression of cords or of various tools on the surface of vessels while they were still soft. This pottery is recognized by archaeologists as belonging to the Point Peninsula Horizon, and it is now believed that it was introduced into the lower Great Lakes basin about 3000 years ago. Pottery that is almost identical with the Point Peninsula pottery of New York and Ontario has been found through central Maine and eastward into New Brunswick. In New York and Ontario this tradition of pottery making evolved through several styles, into what is known as the Owasco Horizon, which, in turn evolved into historic Iroquois. Although the same elements were present in northern New England, and although there was a change as time passed,

the growth is not parallel, but toward a different end product. From this one infers that there ceased to be close contact between the two cultural provinces before the Owasco style had evolved.

It may be significant that pottery of the Point Peninsula tradition is found only as far south as the approximate southern limits of the northern mixed hardwood forest, and that south of an intermediate zone of overlap, the style of pottery shows more intimate connections with the ceramic traditions of New Jersey and the southern states east of the Appalachians.

During the year Mr. Joseph A. Spacer has been preserving and preparing a number of stakes from the Boylston Street Fishweir for exhibition. You will recall that these stakes were from an ancient weir or trap for taking fish that was constructed in Boston's Back Bay about 3700 years ago, and that parts of several weirs were discovered in the excavations for the foundations of the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company Building, and the John Hancock Life Insurance Building. The stakes are being cast in Bio-plastic, a completely transparent substance which will make it possible to exhibit them for the first time. They are believed to be the largest castings of Bio-Plastic which have ever been made. When the long and complicated process is completed, the Foundation will be the only institution which has any of the stakes.

Our work in New Brunswick was not continued during the summer because Mr. Theodore L. Stoddard, Jr., who has been

conducting the work, had an opportunity to go to Alaska as Assistant on the Point Barrow Expedition of the Peabody Museum of Harvard. The party was under the direction of Mr. Wilbert Carter, who, you will recall, taught the class in Anthropology during the winter of 1949-50, when Mr. Byers was away. The experience which Mr. Stoddard gained has contributed greatly to his abilities and value as a research worker. We have, with your consent, set aside funds which would have been used in 1952 to permit us to put a larger party in the field during 1953. Mr. Stoddard is analizing the material from eastern Maine and New Brunswick which he gathered in previous years, as a research course at Harvard, and hopes to have a report ready for publication during the fall.

Mr. Johnson continues as Executive Secretary of the American Anthropological Association, a position to which he has brought ever-increasing stature. He has reorganized and firmly established the office so that it now takes care of the Association's business operations efficiently. He is deeply involved in the formulation of Association policies which are intimately tied to the development of the field of Anthropology as a whole.

In December Mr. Johnson went by invitation to Madison, Wisconsin, to deliver the annual Sigma Xi Lecture. His subject was "Chronology and Radiocarbon Dating". In the afternoon he talked informally to graduate students in geology and anthropology on the same subject.

In previous reports attention has been called to activities of the Committee for the Recovery of Archaeological

Remains. This body was set up by the Society for American Archaeology, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Anthropological Association in order to ensure that valuable archaeological, paleontological and other data of paramount importance be adequately examined, recorded, and salvaged from areas where they would be destroyed by the construction of Federal multi-purpose dams. This Committee enjoys a unique status in that although it has no connection with any agency of the Federal government it is in a position to advise such agencies concerning procedure necessary for the adequate salvage of the desired materials. In its early years the efforts of the Committee were directed toward organizing a program for operations and attempting to impress on the Congress the validity of its claims that valuable portions of our national heritage would be lost forever unless Federal funds were provided for salvage purposes. In these aims it was successful, largely through the drive of Mr. Johnson who has been Secretary of the Committee since its organization. The salvage program is now spending about $200,000 per year on large scale excavation of archaeological sites which are of vital importance. The Committee has been unusually active. Continued observation of the work is necessary so that the highest scientific standards may be maintained. During this year, also, the Committee oversaw a major change in the method of administering the work.

The program is officially known as the Inter-Agency Archaeological Salvage program, involving, as it does, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the

Bureau of Reclamation, and the Corps of Engineers. Because the work is scattered over twenty-eight states, it has been found efficient to contract for archaeological work with qualified institutions. Many of these contracts are inspected by the Committee. It is worth noting that the Committee has overseen the expenditure of about $1,700,00 for archaeology since 1946. Through its efforts an incredible amount of information has come to light, some of it quite unexpected and completely new to science. Mr. Johnson is preparing an account of the archaeological accomplishments of the program.

During the last year the Foundation lost a good friend, Mr. Howard Torrey, of Reading. He had worked with Mr. Moorehead, and had gathered a collection from Cape Cod which is amongst the best in New England. Under the terms of his will this collection, together with his catalogue, all records, equipment, and library were left to the Foundation, with the Massachusetts Archaeological Society named as alternate legatee. Since his archaeological library in large part duplicated titles in our own library, we transferred the duplicates to the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, with the permission of the executors of the Estate. The archaeological specimens which number some 4000 pieces have been accessioned and placed in trays. The somewhat arduous task of cataloguing is scheduled for this winter.

We have accessioned three other collections, and catalogued 377 specimens, among them a collection sent us by the National Museum of Canada during the war, but which had never

been catalogued because of a lack of data. Thanks to the interest of Dr. Douglas Leechman of the National Museum of Canada, full data for the specimens in our possession has at long last been provided.

Our library continues to grow slowly. We have catalogued 17 new titles, representing books purchased. We subscribe to 14 archaeological journals, chiefly by means of Institutional Membership in archaeological societies, many of which are of amateur status. We maintain exchange agreements with 85 institutions, some of which are actively publishing, while others, like ourselves, are not now publishing, but will within a year or two. We have a slow but steady sale for our publications, the proceeds of which are returned to our Reserve for Publication in order to build it up against the day when we will have several very expensive numbers to release. Last year this income amounted to $329.58.

Mrs. Dorothy Bloom has continued to visit the Foundation Library one morning each week in order to keep up the catalogue. Sincere thanks are due Miss Eades for her interest, and Mrs. Bloom for her efforts to ensure that the library shall not revert to the chaotic state in which it was some twenty years ago.

Your Foundation anticipates that the year 1953 will be a busy and fruitful one. We expect to put another and larger party in the field in New Brunswick, following out leads already uncovered. It now seems likely that before the year is out we shall be ready to prepare manuscript for at least

one, if not two, substantial reports.

The state of our knowledge has now reached the point at which the exhibits in the north room are out of date. We shall have to strip it and plan for installation of new material. For this purpose our cases are inadequate. They will have to be remodelled and replaced with more suitable ones. New electrical outlets will have to be installed, and we shall certainly need many new fixtures. The project is only in the discussion stage at the moment, but will be ready for execution within another two or three years. Our important collections have been displayed as static curiosities, but with advances in knowledge it is possible to display them as dynamic elements which will tell a story effectively and simply. The work will be expensive, but it is for this purpose that we have built up reserves during past years.

Only by such repeated modernization can the museum be prevented from falling into senility and decay. Archaeological collections constitute a small part of the record of his accomplishments which man has left. They were first displayed as curios close to a hundred years ago. By dint of continued careful research, students have been able to learn that each one of these objects has a story to tell, and they have learned by persistent work that they are interrelated in such a way as to weave a fabric of history. By means of a sustained program of research it is possible to bring to light new facts about man's unwritten history, to learn of his alliances and enmities, his activities, and

the world in which he lived. Without active research it would be impossible to learn what we now know about the peopling of America, about the droughts and changes in climate, and the struggles of the aboriginal peoples against hardship. To illustrate from only one instance, unless the Foundation had investigated the Boylston Street Fishweir, we should not know that the sea has risen more than 16 feet since Boston was occupied about 3700 years ago. Nor, of more practical interest to those away from the seashore, would we know that our climate seems to be growing steadily milder, for these facts were locked in the ground, and only brought forth by painstaking work and subsequent analysis of facts that were recorded at the time that man's handiwork was uncovered.

It would not be proper to close this report without recording our sense of loss through the death of Mrs. Warren K. Moorehead on December 14. Although her visits had not been frequent in late years, it was always a pleasure to see her in the building which her husband loved so well.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas S. Byers

Douglas S. Byers, Director